

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a structured composite material for accommodating passage of fluids through the structured composite material, the method comprising the steps of:

forming a first layer having a first shrinkage extent, the first layer comprising a nonwoven web;

forming a second layer having a second shrinkage extent different from the first shrinkage extent, the second layer comprising a film;

bonding the second layer to the first layer to form a composite material;
and

shrinking at least one of the first layer and the second layer to produce the structured composite material.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first layer comprises a propylene polymer and the second layer comprises an ethylene-propylene copolymer.

3. ~~(Original)~~ ^{canceled} The method of claim 2, wherein during the shrinkage step, the second layer shrinks relative to the first layer.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of heating the composite material to affect shrinkage of at least one of the first layer and the second layer.

5. (Currently Amended) [The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of] A method for producing a structured composite material

for accommodating passage of fluids through the structured composite material, the method comprising the steps of:

forming a first layer having a first shrinkage extent;

forming a second layer having a second shrinkage extent different from the first shrinkage extent;

bonding the second layer to the first layer to form a composite material;

creping the composite material prior to the shrinking step; and

shrinking at least one of the first layer and the second layer to produce the structured composite material.

6. (Currently Amended) [The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of] A method for producing a structured composite material for accommodating passage of fluids through the structured composite material, the method comprising the steps of:

forming a first layer having a first shrinkage extent;

forming a second layer having a second shrinkage extent different from the first shrinkage extent;

creping the first layer;

stabilizing the creped first layer by bonding the second layer to the first layer; and

shrinking at least one of the first layer and the second layer to produce the structured composite material.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the second layer is bonded to the first layer by one of thermal bonding, pin bonding and differential speed bonding.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of stretching the second layer before the second layer is bonded to the first layer.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the second layer is stretched in a machine direction to about 1.5 to about 6.0 times an initial length.

10. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the second layer is stretched in a machine direction to about 2.0 to about 4.0 times an initial length.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [11] 16, wherein the heterogeneous material shrinks to about 0% to about 99% of an initial length of the heterogeneous material.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [11] 16, wherein the heterogeneous material shrinks to about 10% to about 70% of an initial length of the heterogeneous material.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [14] 16, the heterogeneous material is heated by one of a cure oven, a hot air gun, an infrared-heater, a microwave, radio frequency and a through-air bonder.

16. (Currently Amended) [The method of claim 14, further

comprising the step of] A method for producing a structured heterogeneous material to accommodate passage of fluids through the structured heterogenous material, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a first homogeneous component having a first shrinkage extent;

providing a second homogeneous component having a second shrinkage extent different from the first shrinkage extent;

producing a heterogeneous material by combining the first homogeneous component and the second homogeneous component;

creping the heterogeneous material prior to heating the heterogeneous material;

heating the heterogeneous material; and

shrinking at least one of the first homogeneous component and the second homogeneous component to create the structured heterogenous material.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [11] 16, further comprising the step of adding a filler to at least one of the first homogeneous component and the second homogeneous component.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [11] 16, wherein the first homogenous component comprises a random copolymer.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [11] 16, wherein the second homogeneous component comprises a polypropylene polymer.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [11] 16,

wherein the first homogeneous component and the second homogeneous component are melt spun to produce the heterogeneous material.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [11] 16, wherein the first homogeneous component comprises a scrim material.

22. ^{cancelled}
(Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the second homogeneous component comprises a plurality of fibers which are spun into the scrim material.

23. ^{previously presented}
(Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the scrim material shrinks relative to the plurality of fibers.

24. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a composite material having a structure for accommodating passage of fluids through the composite material, the method comprising the steps of:

forming a first layer having a first shrinkage extent, the first layer comprising a nonwoven web;

applying a second layer to the first layer to form the composite material, the second layer comprising a film and having a second shrinkage extent different from the first shrinkage extent; and

heating the composite material to produce the structure, wherein at least one of the first layer and the second layer shrinks.

25. ^{previously presented}
(Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the first layer shrinks relative to the second layer.

26. ^{previously presented}
(Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the second layer shrinks relative to the first layer.

27. (Currently Amended) [The method of claim 24, further comprising the step of] A method for producing a composite material having a structure for accommodating passage of fluids through the composite material, the method comprising the steps of:

forming a first layer having a first shrinkage extent;
creping the first layer before the second layer is applied to the first layer;
applying a second layer to the first layer to form the composite material,
the second layer having a second shrinkage extent different from the first shrinkage extent; and

heating the composite material to produce the structure, wherein at least one of the first layer and the second layer shrinks.

28. ^{previously presented}
(Original) The method of claim 24, further comprising the step of stretching the second layer before the second layer is applied to the first layer.

29. ^{previously presented}
(Original) The method of claim 24, further comprising the step of pattern embossing the first layer to form thermal bonds which extend through the first layer.

? 30 withdrawn?
? 31 withdrawn?
30-41. (Withdrawn)
32-41. canceled - see Amendment A